

Coping with Trauma/Traumatic Stress

1. **Support:** Identify a supportive person or network (include support group; therapist; partner; supportive mentor or co-worker; family member, friend or others).
 - a. Be mindful of whom to share your experience with (find someone you can trust, who will be accepting and non-judgmental).
2. **Release:** Find a constructive and healthy release for emotions and visceral reactions (crying, journaling, showering, martial arts, dance, art or even talking to the supportive person).
3. **Comfort:** Identify and find sources of comfort (soft pillow/sheets; teddy bear/other object of comfort; warm tea; hug from a friend/loved one; soft music; pet etc.)
 - a. Eat warm turkey, boiled onions, baked potatoes, cream-based soups – these are tryptophan activators, which help you feel tired but good (Patti Levin, LICSW, PsyD; 1989, 2001, 2003, 2011, 2014).
4. **Sleep:**
 - a. Clean your bed and room and change the sights and sounds with things that are comforting and soothing.
 - b. Include pictures of people who make you feel good.
 - c. Practice sleep hygiene-
 - i. Keep a sleep schedule
 - ii. Limit screen time before sleep
 - iii. Take a hot shower
 - iv. Avoid eating, caffeine or substances before sleep
 - v. Exercise regularly
5. **Professional help:** When you find it hard to manage your physical/psychological reactions, reach out to a mental health clinician.